

Ephesians

More than a Makeover

God Has A Plan For This World

Ephesians 1:7-14

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / September 29, 2024

I. God Has A Plan For This World

5x in **3** verses, he drives home to us that we are not living in a random, chaotic world that is just spinning out of control.

- **v. 9** talks about “His will” and “His purpose”
- **v. 10** talks about “a plan”
- **v. 11** talks about “the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will”

These **3 verses** are packed with **5** different Greek words that meant to deliberately plan, manage, arrange, or to have a specific purpose and blueprint for what is going on.

A. His Plan Is No Longer A Secret

Ephesians 1:9 “...making known to us the mystery of His will...”

Our Creator God chooses to let us in on what He is doing!

Christianity has a God who makes things known. He reveals Himself to us, He gives us truth, and He speaks to us through His Word. But the greatest distinction of Christianity is that our God took on flesh and came down to us so that we could know Him.

John 1:18 “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, He has made Him known.”

B. His Plan Includes Both Good And Evil

The Bible assures us that life is not a series of random events that have no meaning. The difficulties you’re facing right now are no accident.

Look at Joseph's response to his brothers after being hated by them, sold into slavery for 17 years, and falsely accused of rape.

Genesis 50:20 “But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

God’s purposes and plans are behind all that’s going on in our world! That’s a bold statement, but it’s biblical!

Psalms 33:8-11 “Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. ¹⁰The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. ¹¹The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.”

C. His Plan Includes All Of Our Choices – Both Good And Bad

Everything is a part of His plan for the fulfillment of the ages.

Ephesians 1:11 "...according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will."

"All things" includes your choices and you can see this all through the Bible – especially in the Old Testament. **1 Kings 12:13-15** is an example of a foolish, bad choice that still accomplished God's purpose.

1 Kings 12:13-15 "Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; ¹⁴and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men... ¹⁵for the turn of events was from the Lord, that He might fulfill His word..."

The Bible teaches that God is completely in control and yet your choices matter and are related to your destiny and our overall history.

D. His Plan Included The Most Evil Human Choices Ever Made

The crucifixion of our Savior is the most glorious and gruesome example of the sovereignty of God and the evil choices of people.

Acts 2:22-23 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know – ²³this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

Acts 4:27-28 "...for truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸to do whatever Your hand and Your plan had predestined to take place."

Jesus was crucified according to God's sovereign purpose and plan. And yet He says, "You killed Him and need to repent of your wicked choice to do so."

Yes, God is sovereign, but we're not locked into a world of fatalism. Your choices matter and God holds each one of us responsible for what we're doing because nobody is forcing us to do it.

II. His Son Will Accomplish His Plan

Ephesians 1:9-10 "Making known the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth."

God, through His Son, has determined to put this entire universe – heaven and earth – back the way it was before sin wrecked it all.

Despite how chaotic our world seems, if Jesus wasn't holding it together right now, our world would completely collapse.

Colossians 1:15-17 “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

III. His Gospel Is The Heart Of God’s Plan

God didn’t reveal the doctrine of election and predestination to confuse us or to keep us from getting saved, but to keep us from boasting.

V. 4 and **5** are looking at salvation from God’s side. But **v. 12** and **13** are looking at it from the human side.

Ephesians 1:12 “...so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.”

You have to choose to put your hope in Christ. That’s the balance and the tension in this passage. Yes, salvation is of God, but we have to choose to put our hope in Christ.

Ephesians 1:13 “In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.”

You had to hear the truth of the Gospel and you had to choose to believe in Him.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”